



# The Messenger

June 2021

St. Mark's Lutheran Church  
A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



*"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8 NRSV)*

Dear Friends in Christ,

So, how do you plan to celebrate Juneteenth this year?

**Juneteenth**

I will not fault you if you have no idea what I am talking about. Up until a few years ago I had never heard of Juneteenth, even though it has been a legal holiday in Wisconsin since 2009.

Many of you may remember from history class, that in 1863 President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, which essentially freed the slaves on land under Union control. However, the Civil War did not end until April of 1865, and it was not until June 19, 1865 when Major General Gordon Granger and the Union Army arrived in Galveston, Texas that the last 250,000 slaves in the United States were set free.

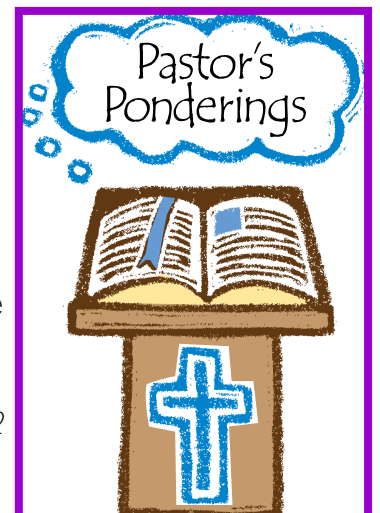
**The name Juneteenth which is a combination of "June" and "nineteenth," is sometimes known as African American Freedom Day.** Juneteenth is not yet a national holiday, but it is recognized as a holiday in 47 states in the Union. It can be startling to realize that although we celebrate Independence Day each fourth of July, that it took nearly another 100 years for many of our country men and women to truly have independence and freedom!

In the biblical book of Micah, from which the verse above is taken, the prophet has taken the nation of Israel to task for turning away from God. The community then asks, just what type of sacrifice will it **take to satisfy the LORD?** *"Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" (Micah 6:7 NRSV)*

This of course is an exaggeration of cultic sacrifice to the extreme. To these questions, the Prophet Micah essentially says, No! God has told you what is good and what the LORD requires. It is to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God.

This rebuke from the prophet still holds true for us today. Our worship services, our hymns of praise, our prayers of thanksgiving and lament all fall flat, if we are turning a blind eye to the injustices that happens in the world around us. When we take an honest look at our past, and look clear eyed at the present, it helps us to understand the concerns and viewpoints of our friends and neighbors of color.

*Continued on page 2*



*Pastor's Ponderings*

*Continued from page 1*

As Christians, Juneteenth is a day to not only to celebrate a more just society that the end of slavery brought forth, but also a day to reflect on how we might continue to create a more equitable future for all people in our country and in the world, so that together we might walk humbly with God into a brighter future.

God's peace be with you all,

Pastor Bob

Those  
Graduating  
In Our  
Church



Our St. Mark's family has several young people graduating this year. We have three high school graduates, Tearneka Joachim, Kylie Lefebber Jasmine Mayo-Rodriguez, and Paige Fifield. We also have four young people who have completed studies in their chosen fields of higher education. They are Ava Dieck, Nicole Reitzner, Sarah Rogers, daughter of Michael Rogers and Jean Memken (our church administrator), and James Ziemke, grandson of Walt and Phyllis Ziemke. They were recognized and honored at our May 30th worship service. **Congratulation and God's Blessings to you all!**

## Electronic Worship Opportunities

- [www.facebook.com/stmarksneenah](http://www.facebook.com/stmarksneenah)
  - Worship Service every Sunday at 10:00 am
  - Devotional every Tuesday at 10:00 am
  - **Children's Message every Sunday morning**
- Please call the church office at 920-725-2828 if you would like a DVD of any worship service.



## MOSES MESSAGE

*A Sunday School Update*

Hi everyone!! Hope you enjoyed your special mail you received. Hope you all are set to have a great summer. Vacation Bible School is being held at Gloria Dei Church in Neenah the week of August 2-5 at 5:00 to 8:00 pm. More information will be coming to you in regards to this VBS. Anyone is welcome to attend. Have a great summer!!!

### BIRTHDAYS

Morgan Lefebber 6/16      Hunter Brill 6/28

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL!!!

With God's Blessings,

Gwen Hoehne, Sunday School Superintendent





# ST. MARK'S CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

April 15, 2021



Meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm by President Laurie Olson.

### Roll Call:

Members Present: Sherri Denney, Bruce Grundman, Mary Jane Hartley, Judy Hellman, Pennie Linna, Laurie Olson, Phyllis Ziemke and Pastor Bob.

Members Excused: Mykayla Tharp, Jeff Tharp.

Members Unexcused: None

Guests: None

In keeping with the COVID 19 guidelines everyone met in person at St. Mark's wearing our face masks and sitting six feet apart.

Devotions: **Pastor Bob led us in devotions with a reading "Why do you hold back your hand."**

Sherri Denney volunteered for devotions next month.

The May Calendar was not passed around for any changes/additions.

Approval of Minutes for the March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting. MSC by Phyllis Ziemke/Bruce Grundman with **the following correction. Under Memorial Report, Leah Hildebrandt's name was omitted from the group that balances was applied toward the sanctuary and fellowship hall updates.**

Thank You Cards - Alyssa Hildebrandt for donating glass serving trays.

### Financial Report:

1. Current Budget balance is \$75,782.95
2. Building Improvement is \$8,638.14
3. **March's giving was \$20,752.37** - Spending was \$17,082.21.
4. Giving needs to be around \$3,500.00 to \$4,000.00 per Sunday to meet spending.

MSC by Phyllis Ziemke/Judy Hellman.

### Pastor's Report:

1. I continue to work with my wife, Laurie, in assembling and editing the Lenten and Holy Week worship videos of the dramatic readings and recording the worship service videos onto DVDs.
2. **I continued to post a Tuesday morning devotional on St. Mark's Facebook page.**
3. I attended a Zoom Lenten worship for the Rostered Leaders of the East-Central Synod of Wisconsin.
4. I met with Tom Goodsett of TFG Audio Visual Solutions to trouble shoot microphone issues in the sanctuary.
5. **I recorded and posted Sunday morning children's messages to our St. Mark's Facebook page.**
6. I continue to meet with our worship musicians and a few church members to record music for our worship services.
7. **I continue to meet with St. Mark's Committees as needed.**
8. **I have attended meetings with St. Mark's Mission and Action team and our Re-Opening Task Force Committee.**

**For the month of  
April 2021**

**Given: \$16,401.62**  
**Spent: \$14,946.33**

9. I met with Robby Miller and Taylor Diemel, friends from the Navarino area, in preparation for their Marriage this June.
10. I had several on-line meetings with church members and church leaders in our community and attended the monthly meeting of pastors of the Appleton Conference.
11. Up-Coming – I will be taking a week of vacation April 19<sup>th</sup> through April 25<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Chuck Fluegel will be doing pulpit supply on Sunday April 25<sup>th</sup>.  
MSC Jeff Tharp/Judy Hellman.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education: No Meeting.

Connection: No Meeting.

Endowment: No Meeting.

Finance/Stewardship:

1. Reviewed the end of the month current account balance. March giving was \$20,752.37 and expenses were \$17,082.21. Difference was +\$3, 670.16. year to date giving towards monthly expenses is +\$3,098.08.
2. Total Associated Bank checking has a balance of \$134,249.86, which includes \$58,466.91 allocated to designated accounts. Additionally, \$106,531.38 in the Thrivent money market and \$102,331.54 in the Mission Investment Fund.
3. **Reviewed detailed financial reports. It was noted that St. Mark's** received \$2,952.00 from the Thrivent Choice Dollars program and \$45.64 from the Script program. These dollars are included in the March giving number.
4. Mary Jane referred to a report on the activity related to designated account. Pastor Bob and Laurie thought this was a helpful report. Reviewed the report. It was noted that Technology funds still need to be moved from Thrivent Mutual Funds down into checking account designated account. Mary Jane and Laurie will take care of this before the next meeting.
5. Pastor Bob asked about a plan for the giving envelope boxes not yet picked up. Discussed options, which included the possibility of mailing the boxes and calling the individuals. Also, talked about the Connections Committee making the calls. It was decided to take time, within the next few weeks, and review which boxes are still not picked up and come up with a plan of action.
6. It was noted that once Fern enters 2021 pledges in the Church Windows programs, the first quarter statements will be mailed. Goal is to do this the week of April 19<sup>th</sup>.

Memorial: No Meeting.

Partnership: No Meeting.



- Doris & Victor Gilbert
  - Pat Wenzel
  - Judy Koerner
  - Tracy Feldman
  - Brett Gawlick
  - Ron Forrest
  - Judy Fowler
  - Tom Hoehne
- Lori Brehm and her sons,  
Ian and Joe
- Todd Hellman



## Property:

1. Joe will get the roller guy here for the lawn.
2. Ritchie will work with Ginny when she starts (May 1<sup>st</sup>)
3. Boiler exhaust pipe needs to be replaced (will keep an eye on it)
4. Flipping the sign – reroute the electric wires to make flipping easier.
5. Spruce up date – May 1<sup>st</sup>, starting at 8:00am. Phyllis will get a sign-up sheet.
6. Jason will tune up the lawn mower for Donnie.
7. Menards card will be changed to Jason Blank and Ginny Scheick.
8. Jason will turn boilers off soon.
9. Bruce will call Fox Valley Stone for a price on a new fireplace. Estimated cost: {\$3-\$5,000.}



## Social Ministry:

1. We did not meet, but connected by telephone.
2. We sent gift cards to some St. Markians needing a little help for an Easter holiday celebration.
3. We sent Easter cards to some of our members who have lost a spouse or were having medical issues.
4. Next project will be to get in touch with any family members completing high school or higher education. Will put something in *The Messenger*.

## Worship and Music:

1. The Lenten series was well received. The narrative helped make it more meaningful to everyone and the visuals were nicely correlated with the narrative.
2. The Maundy Thursday service will include First Communion for four individuals, (Haile Anderson, Ariana Hopkins, Morgan Lefeber and Joseph Rose). Gwen Hoehne, Pennie Linna, and the new communicants will strip the altar.
3. A special Good Friday Service will include special pre-recorded music, scripture readings by various people from the congregation, and visuals.
4. On Easter Sunday there will be services at 8:00 am and 10:00 am. Many people have donated potted flowers to decorate the sanctuary. Jane Hartley is in charge of the decorating. People can take home their flowers after the last service. There will be communion both services.
5. The rest of the April services were briefly discussed.
6. The Church Council will be installed on April 11<sup>th</sup>. **This is also “Holy Humor” Sunday.**
7. There will be a baptism on April 18<sup>th</sup>.
8. Pastor Chuck will preach on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Bob will be on Vacation from April 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>.

## Youth: No Meeting

### In- Person Task Force Meeting: Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

1. Council decided, at their March 2021 meeting, to allow outside groups to begin meeting in the church beginning the week of April 12<sup>th</sup>. Task Force was asked to provide precautionary procedures for the groups.
2. Task Force noted that groups are to follow the approved outside group use guidelines:  
Masks will be required.
  - \* Follow social distancing
  - \* Clean after meeting – spray bottles with cleaning directions in each meeting room
  - \* No communal food – Bringing of their own individual drinks and snacks will be allowed.
  - \* Room capacities: Mary room – 12, Library – 4, Lounge – 10, Fellowship Hall – 36
3. **NOTE: Bathrooms and common areas will be cleaned by St. Mark’s.**
4. Bruce will pick up a few more hand spray bottles and fill with the sanitizer solution. Laurie will ensure bottles, along with a note on cleaning responsibilities, are placed in the meeting rooms.

5. Task Force discussed returning to singing in worship. After a discussion, it was decided to resume singing with use of hymnals beginning Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Pastor Bob will include this in his worship announcements and inform people that if they feel uncomfortable with the singing in worship, that the fellowship hall is an alternative space, allowing more opportunity for greater social distancing. Masks will continue to be worn.
  6. Reviewed how the ushering and greeting has been going. All through the pandemic there have been no issues. Task Force will continue to take on the ushering and greeting duties through April with regular teams resuming these duties beginning May 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  7. It was also decided to have the counting teams resume their duties May 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  8. It was noted that no one has participated in the parking lot system attendance option, since returning to in-person worship. Therefore, it was decided to discontinue this option. Laurie will post this on Facebook and ask that this be noted in the bulletin and May newsletter.
  9. Task Force will meet in early May to review how things are going and to discuss beginning fellowship time (after worship).
- Committee Reports: MSC by Judy Hellman/Phyllis Ziemke.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

1. In light of the COVID-19 Pandemic the following decisions have been put in place for St. Mark's church. This will be revisited on an as needed basis.
  - \* **St. Mark's has reopened to all outside groups. The Task Force has set up specific room size** guidelines along with mask and social distancing guidelines. {See guidelines under their report}
  - \* Regular Church services for St. Marks has re-opened and is also available on Facebook Live. Now that the camera is up and able to mainstream into the Fellowship Hall we do not need to limit our church worship service attendance. Due to no parking lot attendance since the church has reopened, this will be discontinued.
  - \* Church office is presently open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday in the morning from 8:30 am to noon.
  - \* Food Pantry program will continue, following safety guidelines.All of the above decisions will continue to be monitored on a regular basis as we continue to work our way thru this health crisis facing our country.
2. Mission and Vision: has put together a short survey to get some feedback on from the congregation. There will be a link to it on Facebook, or hard copies are available.
3. WELCA Convention is November 13<sup>th</sup>. **St. Mark's will be the host for this event. They are expecting** about 60 people. Lunch to be provided. MSC by Phyllis Ziemke/Sherri Denney.
4. **Filthy Fun Kids Run, St. Mark's will help out at this event. We are looking for 20 to 30 volunteers.** A sign up sheet will be posted. MSC by Mary Jane Hartley/Pennie Linna.
5. Community Table served 65 people.

MSC by Phyllis Ziemke/Judy Hellman to adjourn at 7:25 P.M

**We closed with the Lord's Prayer.**

Next meeting is May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

Submitted by Recording Secretary,  
Donna Joachim





Our Food Pantry was nominated for the Selfless Samaritan Award in the Silent Sam Campaign Thank You Celebration, and we were awarded a \$25.00 gift card. It will be used to purchase needed supplies. We have been very pleased with the wonderful support given by so many generous people in our congregation. Thank you. We couldn't help so many people without you. In April we were able to help 161 people with necessary supplies.

We are in need of soap---bar, dish and laundry and juice. We are doing okay on most other supplies, but all donations are greatly appreciated.



The Task Force did not meet in May. A meeting is scheduled for June 1. Watch for more information on Facebook, via emails and in Sunday bulletins.



### Lydia Circle Returns

Lydia Circle will once again convene on June 17 at 1:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. This group of women meet on the third Thursday of every month for fellowship, friendship and enrichment. They welcome any women who want to join them. Lydia Circle members, it's great to have you back at St. Mark's!



The Mission of the Month for June is the Fox Valley Community Table. Fox Valley Community Table (FVCT) is a free meal site located in the lower level of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Neenah. They serve lunch every Tuesday and Saturday from 11:30 am-12:30 pm. There is no income or residency requirements. Once a month, members of St. Mark's provide a meal for those at the Fox Valley Community Table. If you would like to donate to buy food for these meals, please check the "Mission" column on your giving envelopes and mail them to: St Mark's Lutheran

Church, 140 S. Green Bay Rd., Neenah, WI 54956, or bring them with you and put them in the fish bowl when you attend worship anytime in June.





### Living a Culture of Mission and Vision Update

The St. Mark's Mission and Vision Team has met numerous times, since the end of March, 2021. The process will continue throughout the summer. This process involves an assessment, a discernment of our identity, creation of goals, and implementation of our plan. We have completed the assessment (survey) and we are now discerning our identity.

Thank you to those who have been participating in the weekly devotions. We invite you to continue to **join us on this journey with the weekly stories of a person or community who discerned God's call for them.** After each reading, reflect on the questions. These questions can be posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex or read and answer on the provided links on our Facebook page. Paper copies of the devotionals are available on the table in the Narthex.

Thank you to those who completed a survey. The survey is a tool to be used in discerning our identity.

### Survey Summary

64 total responses.

73% were women.

81% aged 55 & older.

With 1 being extremely dissatisfied & 10 being extremely satisfied, 84% rated their satisfaction between 7-10 and **16% rated their overall satisfaction with St. Mark's between 1-6.**

**30% think they have something (gifts, interests and time) to offer, but don't know how to do so.**

83% say that the congregation, compared to three years ago, is the same or stronger.

**The activities rated highest in importance at St. Mark's were Worship, Fellowship Time, Food Pantry, Missions of the Month, Sunday School, God's Work, Our Hands, and Property Caretaking/Projects.**

All written responses have been read and acknowledged by the Mission and Vision Team.

**St. Mark's Mission and Vision Team: Tara Dieck, Mary Jane Hartley, Sara Hopkins, Dawn Jones, Pennie Linna, Ellen LaMarche, Nancy Maslow, Laurie Olson, Jeff Tharp, Tom Wenzel, and Pastor Bob Wilkinson**

## OUR WAY OUT

While in London, Timothy Merrill was intrigued that signs with arrows read WAY OUT, rather than EXIT, as they do in America. "Everywhere I went, I saw signs that showed me the WAY OUT," he writes. That made him ponder all the Bible characters who looked for a WAY OUT of predicaments. Moses looked for a WAY OUT of Egypt, Daniel certainly wanted a WAY OUT of the lions' den and countless people thought (and still think) there's no WAY OUT from their sins. "The good news of the Gospel," Merrill writes, "is that Jesus Christ is the WAY OUT! He is our exit from the messes and disasters we create. He is the exit from sin and unrighteousness. He is the WAY OUT of a life without purpose and the WAY IN to an abundant life. And the symbol of the WAY OUT is not an arrow but a cross. What a blessing to know that Jesus knows — and is — the WAY OUT!"







**Giving through the GivePlus Mobile app is an easy and convenient way to donate to St. Mark's. It only takes a moment to set up an account:**

1. Download the free GivePlus app from the App Store or Google Play.
2. Find our church by ZIP code {54956} or by searching "St. Mark's".
3. Donate!

*Thank you for your generosity!*

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Neenah**

## ST. MARK'S GIVING OPTIONS:

- \* Mail in your giving envelopes to St. Mark's: 140 S. Green Bay Rd Neenah, WI 54956
- \* Electronic Simply Giving/Vanco forms on our website or in church office. Call the office at 920-725-2828 to have this form mailed to you if you prefer not to leave your house.
- \* Download the free GivePlus App from the App Store or Google Play. Find our church by zip code (54956) or by searching "St. Mark's."

*God bless you and thank you for your faithful and generous support during these unprecedented times.*



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**August 1 – August 5, 2021**  
**5:30 – 8:00 PM**  
**Hosted by Gloria Dei, Neenah**

## **The VBS that's just the ticket!**

- ▲ New friends ▲ Amazing experiments ▲ Loco motion games
- ▲ Chew chew snacks ▲ Surprising adventures ▲ Incredible music

Watch for details and registration mid-June.

## Are you a BAG Lady?

(BLESSED and GIFTED)

East Central Synod of Wisconsin

Women **ELCA**

Fall Retreat in the main lodge  
at Crossways - **Imago Dei Village**  
W8160 Cloverleaf Lake Rd  
Clintonville, WI 54929

**Saturday, September 18, 2021**

Registration begins at 8:00a

Fun filled program 8:45a-4p

**Retreat Leader – Reverend Judy Deckert**

*She discovers extraordinary treasures in rosemaking, writing and exercising imagination as she tends to ordinary things in Kimberly.*



**Register this summer!**

**Information in the Open Door,**

Like us on Facebook - East Central  
Synodical Women of ELCA,

**on the Synod website, or  
contact**

**Carol Cleveland at**

[cacleveland50@gmail.com](mailto:cacleveland50@gmail.com)

**(Registration due by 9/7/2021)**

## Why Flag Day is Important

America was founded as a “nation under God,” and has been looked up to by other nations for over two hundred years. Unfortunately, other countries – and some of our own citizens – are disgruntled with America today. Even though our reputation has taken some hits, we’re still a strong country with high ideals and proud people.

There’s a simple way you can help show that to the world – by flying the flag. Every time you put a flag out, you’re saying, “I’m an American and proud of what this flag represents.” The flag stands for “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” for religious freedom, and for other rights that many nations lack. The flag represents our history and our goals for a better future for all.

Flag Day is celebrated each year on June 14. Fly your flag high!



## Some thoughts about Dads



- “The heart of a father is the masterpiece of nature.” – Antoine F. Prévost
- “To the world you are a dad. To our family you are the world.” – Unknown
- “The best fathers have the softest, sweetest hearts. In other words, great dads are real marshmallows.” – Richelle E. Goodrich
- “Dad: a son’s first hero, a daughter’s first love.” – Unknown
- “A good father is one whose only reason for putting down a laughing baby is to pick up a crying one.” – Linda Poindexter
- “My father didn't do anything unusual. He only did what dads are supposed to do – be there.” – Max Lucado
- “I love my father as the stars. He’s a bright shining example and a happy twinkling in my heart.” – Terri Guillemets



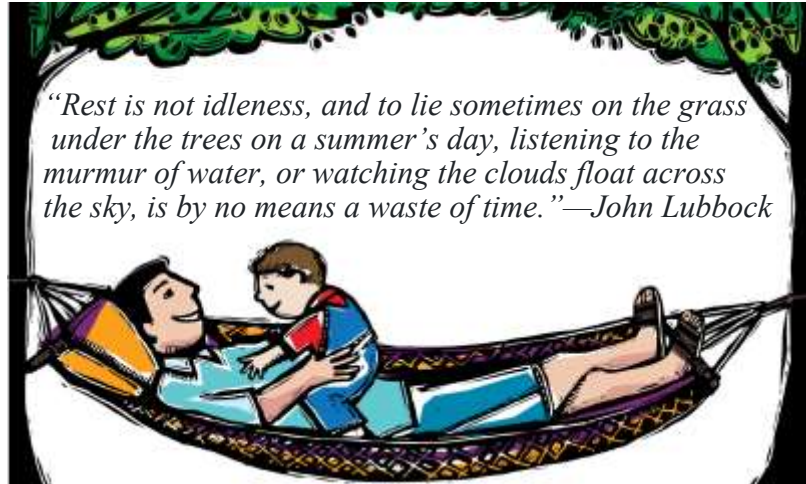
# Visit St. Mark's Website

[www.stmarksneenah.org](http://www.stmarksneenah.org)



Do we have your email address?

Please send an e-mail to [office@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:office@stmarksneenah.org) so we can update our church records.



### St. Mark's Office & Leadership Email Addresses

St. Mark's office (Jean): [office@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:office@stmarksneenah.org)

Pastor Bob's e-mail is still: [pastorbob@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:pastorbob@stmarksneenah.org)

Mary Jane Hartley's e-mail is now: [treasurer@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:treasurer@stmarksneenah.org)

## St. Mark's Lutheran Church

140 S. Green Bay Road

Neenah, WI 54956

